

Something Like Closure

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Summary: A sequel to 'Talent For Reality'- Bobby learns more about Lydia than he really wanted to know.

Something Like Closure

> <meta name="Author"> something Disclaimer: X-Men belong to Marvel.
The story and Lydia belong to me.

Note: This doesn't really have much of a plot, and I don't know that it's any good. I just wrote it 'cause it was so damn fun to write Lydia and Bobby. This is a sequel to 'A Talent for Reality.' You really should read that first so everything'll make sense, but I _am_ hoping that, what with all the exposition, this story can stand (or collapse) by itself. Probably not, though. ;)

Comments, questions, feedback (!!), requests to archive (!!!), and basically anything can be sent to kassia06@yahoo.com.
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****Something Like Closure****

Scott Summers walked into the Danger Room, and surveyed the room with no little satisfaction. He had worked hard on the redesign, and the capabilities of the room seemed endless. Stifling a smug little smile, he began to direct the X-Men in the procedure for their next session. He stepped over to say a word in his wife's ear, when his shin encountered something soft, moving- living. He let out a gasp of surprise, and threw his body weight the other way so he wouldn't squish whatever it was. Under the gaze of five or so bemused X-Men, he toppled over.

The thing that had caused him to fall came over and started rubbing against him, purring. Scott looked around and his teammates. "Would someone tell me why there is a _cat_ in the Danger Room?"

Unsurprisingly, Bobby Drake stepped forward and picked the creature

up. He smiled at it, and commented, "Oh, I brought it in for Lydia. I wonder where she is." Cradling the cat, he glanced around.

The lady in question appeared suddenly in the middle of the room, and went up to Bobby. "There you are! Hello sweetums! Did the bad man hurt you?" It took Scott a moment of extreme confusion to realize she was talking to the cat, and not Bobby.

Scott, rising to his feet with the help of his amused-looking wife, glared at the trio of Bobby, Lydia, and the cat. "This is too much, Bobby. We simply cannot keep live animals in the Danger Room."

"But, Scott, it's Lydia's!"

"Don't worry, Summers," Lydia said, casting him a scornful glance. "I'll keep it with me on the couch while you guys train."

Scott blinked. "Couch...?" he said faintly. Then he at last noticed the old couch in the corner. And the television. And the good Lord- mini-refridgerator. "What the hell? Where did those come from?"

"Oh, I found the TV in one of the storage rooms, along with the fridge," Bobby explained ingenuously. "And the couch was in one of the unused bedrooms." He turned back to Lydia, and handed the cat over to her. She held it possessively, and retreated to her corner. Bobby called after her, "When we're done training, we can watch the rest of 'Grosse Pointe Blank.' And I brought 'Batman', too. Can you believe she's never seen 'Batman'?" he asked Scott cheerfully.

"Uh..."

"Anyway, what were you saying before you tripped over the cat?"

Scott, finding himself without a conveniently placed wall on which to bang his head, proceeded to patiently repeat his instructions.

The Professor entered just as John Cusack arrived at his high school reunion. Lydia had met Xavier a couple of times before, and didn't think much of him, since she had a instinctive dislike for, well, everyone. Xavier, for his own part, found the fact that he couldn't sense Lydia's presence without a conscious effort unnerving, but didn't mind her since he had assured himself that she wasn't a threat to the team.

He looked around Lydia's little corner. "This is- ah- interesting." His eyes alighted on a framed Japanese print on the wall, and he looked mildly distressed. "Bobby, have you been nailing holes in the Danger Room wall?"

Bobby was shocked. "Good God, no! I could barely dent that thing." Xavier looked relieved. "Lydia nailed it."

"Of course you just assumed that a man did it," Lydia spat.

The Professor rubbed his forehead. "I appreciate your situation, I really do Ms. Hawk, but you just can't go nailing holes into the Danger Room wall."

"Yes I can. I just did," she pointed out reasonably.

Bobby felt sure that the Professor's shiny head would soon implode. Somehow, the man did not. Instead he continued patiently, "Then I ask you not to do so again." Lydia shrugged indifferently, and the Professor sighed. "You can't keep all these things here, either. They're a hazard with energy beams and lightening bolts hurling around."

"But, Prof," objected Bobby, "it's good practice for not harming civilians. We've been lucky so far, but you never know when a stray kinetically-charged playing card will blow up right in some poor sap's face."

"Actually, you guys haven't been that lucky," interjected Lydia. "You don't know about Wes Roberts."

"How did you know about Wes Roberts?" the Professor inquired sharply.

"I heard you lecturing Summers a couple of years back." She turned to Bobby and sighed, "Poor man'll never walk normally again. Summers blasted his left shin off."

Bobby's eyes brightened. "Really? I never heard about that..."

"With good reason," said the Professor hastily. "Ah, Bobby? Would you come with me for a moment? I wish to talk to you outside."

"G'luck Drake," murmured Lydia with a evil smile.

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 Bobby walked down the hall besides the Prof's chair, as Xavier gathered his thoughts. After all, Bobby was in no hurry to hear whatever the man had to say. However, it wasn't very long before the Professor spoke.

"Bobby, you seem to be on very good terms with Ms. Hawk. I was wondering if you would do something for me."

"Depends on what it is." Always the safest answer. Except with parents, 'cause then they'd give you that and-since-when-is-

>this-a-democracy-kid? look. <p>

"How much do you know about Ms. Hawk's origins?"

What was he getting at? "Nothing, really. She doesn't either- or so she says, at least. Jean has a few guesses, though, and they sound as good as anything."

"Bobby, we cannot keep an actual being, whatever type of being she may be, trapped in our Danger Room. Some attempt must be made to return her to wherever she belongs. She does not seem to remember her past, and I'm reluctant to probe into her mind. I was hoping that, perhaps, you could research her history a bit..."

"I don't think Lydia would appreciate it," Bobby said doubtfully. "She hates it when I bring up the subject. In fact, she's been known to throw stuff at me on occasion." _I, on the other hand, would be thrilled to find out what the hell she is where the hell she came from._

"Ms. Hawk doesn't have to know," Xavier said ruthlessly. "I just want the comfort of knowing we did what we could. And," he added, mainly to himself, "I don't want people nailing holes in the Danger Room wall..."

He had always wanted to know more about Lydia's past, but he had never wished to go against her wishes. Now it was a job to do- assigned by the guy who founded the team, and not optional.

It might have been a little paranoid, but he decided not to use any of the computers at the mansion. Of course, it probably wouldn't be a problem, but Jean had once hypothesized that Lydia was a telepath who had been trapped on the astral plane and- as she had later explained to Bobby- she had linked herself to Cerebro, which could enhance telepathic abilities. Jean had wanted to say more, but Bobby had cut her off since he was going somewhere with Hank. The point was, if Lydia was connected to Cerebro, she might be able to see what was going on on the other computers.
>Okay, so I'm really_ paranoid._

He finally went to the Westchester Library on the off-chance that he'd find some sort of article on a certain Lydia Nicole Hawk. Fortunately his left arm was the one in the cast, so he didn't have too much trouble.

He found quite a few Hawks in the archives, but none of them seemed to be or be related to Lydia. There was a strange feeling in his stomach, as, at last, he searched the obituaries. The feeling grew even more intense as he actually _found _it.

So she had lived in the area. Or at least, he thought glumly, gazing at the screen, died in it. He glanced around nervously, as if he'd suddenly find Lydia, watching him angrily. It was impossible, but still...

He turned back to the obit. She had died at the age of 17, after a month in a coma, eight, nine years back. It didn't say anything else about the cause of death. Her mother lived in California, and her dad- he lived in Westchester. Or had, anyhow. She also had an older brother, who lived in Manhattan. Bobby chewed his knuckles, and scrolled down. Not many personal comments, except the usual BS. No 'She will be remembered for this and that,' or anything particular. Feeling just a bit traitorous, Bobby scanned the article one more time, then closed it.

It was strange to find out that one of your friends had been dead for as long as you had known them. Bobby had never realized just _how strange_, though, until now, since it had never happened to him before.

He flirted lightly with the idea of going to see the father. But he couldn't- what would he say, after all?

He went home, wishing very much Xavier hadn't asked him to do this.

"Oh, _good idea. _We're alone in a dark house chasing a psycho killer! Let's split up, Scully! _Idiots_."

It was a familiar sound, but one Jean hadn't heard in a while. She followed the noise to where Bobby was comfortably ensconced on the couch, watching X-Files and talking to the TV. Since Lydia had developed her David Duchovney obsession, it was rare that Bobby didn't watch the show in the Danger Room. Yet here he was.

"Hey, Jean. Oh, for God's sake, Mulder! Of course you're going to get attacked when you're alone in a creepy attic! Sheesh!"

Jean knew Scott was probably watching the same show on the TV in their room, but for Scott it was a religious experience rather than an interactive one. She sat down beside Bobby, tucking her feet beneath her. She awaited for commercial break to >breach the subject of why he was out here. She knew that, occasionally, her sympathy was unwanted, but besides having many years of intimate observation of human behavior at her back, she had the ability to sense people's emotions, and thus a duty to try to help others. Scott had a very well-developed sense of duty, but with Jean it was something deeper, more instinctive. <p>

When at last questioned, Bobby said that he thought Lydia wanted to be alone for awhile. When further pressed, he said, more rushed, "I know it sounds stupid, but I'm feeling kinda guilty. The Prof had me look into Lydia's past, which is bad enough in itself, but Jean, she's- she's _dead. _I can't tell her that..."

Seeing immediately that this was no time to point out that this came as no surprise at all to her, Jean soothed, "It doesn't change anything, Bobby. And she probably wouldn't care either way."

"Yeah, she'd say something like 'You want people to treat you equally, but then the first minute a dead person comes along you treat 'em like dirt. _X-Men!_' " Bobby's impression of the blonde was very good, if a little exaggerated, and Jean had to smile when he finished it up with one of Lydia's favorite swearwords: _X-Men!_, second only to a disgusted exclamation of _Men!_ >
"Bobby, from what I know about Lydia- and it's a fairly good amount, since I've shared a body with her- the only thing she'll mind is that you even looked into her past..."

"Yeah, and that's quite enough, thanks," said Bobby, rubbing his head as if in memory. "I just- I just don't feel like doing this right now. Another day."

"I think that you'd better-"

"Shhh!" said Bobby quickly. "Show's back on."

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The fact that his (second-best?) friend was dead was irrelevant though, when Bobby woke up the following morning to see the grounds blanketed in snow. Upon finding that basically everyone else in the

mansion was well aware of the snow (and would you please stop screaming it in our ears, it's morning for God's sake, Bobby) he rushed into the Danger Room to find Lydia.

"Hey!" he called cheerfully to the empty room. "It snowed last night! The place is _covered_!"

Lydia appeared, and said sardonically, "Thanks for the info, Drake. For your next trick, why don't you run in and out of the door yelling 'Look! I have a body even when I'm _not _in the Danger Room!'"
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 Bobby was unabashed. "I figure Jean could take you outside," he replied cheerfully. "So y'wanna go? It's stopped snowing and the sun is already starting to come out. The snow might not live that much longer. Anyway, it had to be like forever since you last saw snow. Jean and you didn't see any on your little road trip, right?"

"No, but can't Munroe just call some up?" she asked plaintively, as if she had something better to do. Of course, for all he knew, she did. He had no idea where she went when he disappeared. When he had asked, she had tossed her head and said it was none of his business.

"I'll ask Jean, 'kay?"

Lydia pressed her lips together for a moment, and then smiled her half-smile. "Sure. Sounds good."

Warren watched his friend tiptoe around the snow-covered ground outside mansion until he could no longer contain himself. "What _are _you doing Hank?"

Hank gave him a condescending look. "It is a demonstrated scientific fact that, if someone should desire to pummel a specific rather than a random individual with snow, the snowier must first be cognizant of the location of the snowee."

"So," said Warren, after digesting this for a moment, "you're trying to find Bobby so you can throw snowballs at him?"

Hank looked at Warren, chagrin distorting his blue features. "Yes, but don't say it _that _way."

"I'll help you," said Warren.

He crept over one step ahead of Hank, who was humming the Mission Impossible theme as they flattened themselves against the side of the house.

"I hear them," he hissed. Hank nodded and motioned for silence.

"...wouldn't work," said Jean's voice. "He already knows about this."

"Aw." Bobby sounded disappointed. "Well, there's gotta be someone this'd work on! It seems a shame not to take advantage of it. This is the best opportunity for a practical joke _ever._"

Warren turned to Hank, who murmured, "It seems that Ms. Grey and Mr. Drake are planning an attack of their own."

"Obviously, we've got to beat them to it," Warren whispered back. "Snowballs, or something more elaborate?"

"Oh, elaborate, definitely... Shhh. Our opponents seem to be engaged in whispered conference."

The two strained their ears to hear, but neither Jean's nor Bobby's comments could be discerned, except one chuckle from Bobby and an indignant "Like hell I will! That's sick!" from Jean. Warren let out a snort of laughter, and quickly covered his mouth to stop further noise. There was silence around the corner, and Hank and Warren stood still, fearing they were about to be discovered.

It was not the case, however. Next they heard Jean coo, "Your sense of humor is _so _much better than Scott's. That's what I love about you, you know."

"What are you- mmph!" Bobby's reply was muffled by something, and, after a quick exchange of glances, Hank dared to venture a peak around the corner. Warren followed suit.

His eyes were wide when he turned back to Warren. "Ah... I think, perhaps, the snow can wait for a more convenient time?"

Warren, not trusting himself to speak, nodded mutely, and the two slid quietly and _very _quickly away.

Around the corner, Bobby finally emerged from the kiss, breathless and rather dazed. "God, Lydia, what was that?"

Lydia giggled. "Didn't you hear McCoy and Worthington around the corner?"

"Oh, Christ!" Bobby quickly looked around the corner, but the only sign that anyone had been there was Beast's familiar prints, and the mark of Angel's boots in the snow. "How could... They think you're _Jean_!"

"Exactly! I can't believe I came out here just for the _snow_! You're right- the possibilities are endless. I think I'll go hit on LeBeau now."

"Like hell you will! Jean trusted you with herself!. When she gets back from the astral plane, or at least, her mind does..." It felt weird, saying these things to Jean's body. Really weird. "Anyway, she'll be _really_ mad."

Lydia-Jean tossed her head, and stood up. "Well, I don't need _your_ help. But I am _very _disappointed in you." She began to walk away, but then paused, to add, "Do you think Munroe would fall for it if I made a pass at her?"

Somehow Bobby managed to reply, albeit in a very choked voice, "No, I really don't think so."

Bobby stared at the phone book. He was damned if he'd give in first. He'd make the thing blink first if he had to let his eyes dry out and shrivel up and fall out of their sockets.

Here I am, having a staring contest with a phone book. Yes, I'm sane. Why do you ask?

He sighed and picked up the phone book at last, and turned to the H's. Scanning it, he at last found who seemed to be his man. _Richard Hawk_. Right name, right area. God, he couldn't believe he was actually considering doing this, but he _needed_ to find out how Lydia had died. It might hold the key to... something.
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 Bobby scribbled down the address.

An aura of neglect pervaded the house, a dusty, musky odor of a place forgotten by the world. It was damned depressing. Even more so was the house's occupant- a man eroded and crippled by time, and much too surprised to have a visitor. Bobby waved aside the offer of a drink. "I don't intend to stay long, Mr. Hawk. A... mutual friend told me a few years back she was dead, and I was in town and I thought I'd stop by. Give you my rather belated condolences." This felt about as good as clubbing baby seals, but he pressed on. "Very belated condolences, actually. I'm sorry, sir."

"No, no, not at all," said the man, misinterpreting his apology. "It's no trouble. A surprise that's all. My daughter's old friends don't come by often." The look he gave Bobby seemed to add, _and I don't want them to._

"Finding out she was dead was... something of a shock. I'm only sorry I didn't get a chance to come sooner. If you don't mind me asking, just how did she die?"

"Coma," he replied curtly.

"I don't think that qualifies as a cause of death," Bobby murmured, then adding, "But, ah, what caused the coma?"

"I don't know. The people she hung out with- I don't even like to think of the things they did." His tone was not encouraging, but after a moment he continued softly, as if the words were a peace offering to his daughter's memory, "Except for some stuff we got rid of, her room's still like it was. Maybe you could find something to remind her of you."

Bobby acquiesced, hardly believing how lucky he was. He hadn't been sure if this was even the house she grew up in.

Even lit, the room was dark. The walls were white, but their brightness was immediately negated by the reds, blacks, and purples of her room. Mr. Hawk had spoken the truth when he said that they had left everything like it was: the novels on her bookshelf were stuffed in sideways and backwards, her music tapes were arranged in an order only comprehensible to the owner of the room, and her papers were still on the desk.

Mr. Hawk stopped in the doorway, and let Bobby go ahead. "She was a

good enough girl," he commented, as Bobby looked around. "Not athletic, or very good in school, and the friends she had I didn't think much of. Nice to see she had some decent friends, too. What'd you say you did for a living?"

"I'm an accountant," he murmured, picking up a picture of a blond girl from off the dresser. It looked to be a school picture, and the girl in it wore a lot of eye-makeup and bright red lipstick. A rather contemptuous smile curved her lips- whether for the photographer, the school, or the world in general, Bobby wasn't sure.

"You can keep it, if you want," Mr. Hawk said, eyeing Bobby thoughtfully.

Bobby shook his head, feeling suddenly guilty as this man who would never see his daughter again offered a valued memory of her to someone who could see her everyday. He shouldn't be here; he had no right to trespass on Lydia's ground, and he had no right to dredge up past emotions for this man. Mr. Hawk might not be the most loving father, but still, it had to hurt to lose a child. Morally convenient as it might be for Bobby to imagine him as a bitter, hateful man who considered himself well rid of his daughter, it probably wasn't the case.

"I'm sorry to do this to you, sir," Bobby said impulsively. He wasn't quite sure the comment conveyed all he wanted it to- _I'm sorry I lied, I'm sorry your hurt and alone and I'm adding insult to injury, I'm sorry for doing this to Lydia, though she may never know._

Mr. Hawk's shrug gave Bobby the impression he took the word's at face value, alas. Deciding it would be better not to root through Lydia's wardrobe in front of her father, Bobby said he was finished, and followed Mrs. Hawk out of the room. While leading the way down the hall, Mr. Hawk stopped abruptly and turned to Bobby, a shadowy reflection of his daughter as he looked the younger man over with that familiar calculating expression. "Just how well did you know my daughter?"

"Um, uh," and just how was he supposed to take _that_? "Pretty well," he said lamely, and added, after a beat, "Well enough to come back here."

Mr. Hawk nodded. "I don't know if... Huh. You want her diary?"

Bobby looked at him, opened his mouth to speak and... his mouth just stayed there.

She had a diary?

Why's he offering it to me?

_Lydia kept a _diary?_

_As in a
gee-I-have-such-a-big-crush-on-so-and-so-and-I-hate-life-and-my-mom-and-I-got-so-drunk-I-passed-out-last-_

>night-and-so-and-so-is-a-lying-slut diary? Or whatever the hell girls wrote in those things.

Mr. Hawk, watching Bobby's face anxiously, added, "I've never looked at it, and- well- I don't want to, but I don't want it to sit up their, either, rotting away, holding all her _secrets_. I don't care if you read it, destroy it, whatever..." His voice dropped. "I just want the damned thing out of here."

Already feeling guilty enough, Bobby had been about to refuse, but then the man had to go and attack him and his poor conscience with that- that raw display of emotion that he didn't seem able to put into words. Maybe he should take it, and just never open it. _Ha. And since when do you have that much will power?_ "Are you sure...?" he faltered.

"You'd be doing me a favor," the man insisted.

Dazed, Bobby followed the man as he turned around and went to remove a crimson-bound book from Lydia's desk. It didn't have a lock, but the thing seemed to have an aura privacy, forbidden ground... or maybe that was the effect of the words 'Top Secret' written in a childish scrawl. Whichever.

He took it gingerly, as if it might be poisoned or booby-trapped. Then, with some polite farewells, Bobby left.

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Jean hummed to herself as she took the champagne bottle by its neck. Walking to the other side of the kitchen, she paused as someone entered. Making sure her bathrobe was secure, she looked up to see Bobby enter. She smiled brightly and falsely. "Hi Bobby. Where have you been all day?"

"Around," he replied vaguely, sitting down at the kitchen table.

"Oh, that's nice. Well, excu-"

"I fell terrible Jean! Terrible! I got Lydia's diary, you know... and I, I read it..."

"Well, that was a mistake. I need to-"

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"Damn right it was a mistake!" Bobby leaned back, gripping the table to keep from falling. "I didn't _want_ to know that much about her, about what went on in her head. And just think, all that misery, she doesn't even remember them... It's bad enough having to tell her she's dead, but to give her a glimpse of what her life was like... I can't tell her, but I can't _not_ _tell_ her..."

"Be honest. Tell her everything. I'm sure she'll forgive you. Gotta g-"

Bobby rested his head in his hands. "I don't want to be the bearer of bad news, but, if I don't tell her her mistakes, isn't she destined to repeat them?"

"_No _one_ is destined to repeat the stupid mistakes they made in high school," snapped Jean. "Especially not dead people. And you're overreacting. Go get some sleep or something. Now, if you will be so kind as to excuse me, I have people to see and places to go."

Bobby shrugged. "Aw, if it's Scott, _he _can wait. He's only your

husband after all." He grinned. "And if it's not your husband..."

"Why, Bobby," she replied, batting her eyelashes, "the only person I'm seeing who's not my husband is you."

Bobby started, and, recovering himself, glared at her. With a smirk, Jean turned around and left the kitchen before he could reply..

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"Hey Drake," Lydia greeted him cheerfully. "I haven't seen you since... yesterday, in fact. When you brought the microwave in. And the CD player. And the bonsai tree. If I didn't know better, I'd say you felt guilty."

His first natural impulse was to deny it, but, "Actually that's what I came to talk to you about. Um... well, might as well get this all out, right?"

"Why don't you sit down, have a drink, or a cigarette to calm your nerves?"

"No, thanks."

"Then I will," she said. He watched in silence as she poured herself a drink, lit a cigarette, and at last sat down on the arm of the couch, starting at him expectantly. "Well...?"

He proceeded to tell her the story, and, as he told it, her realized he had been totally freaked out about nothing. He hadn't really done anything really wrong. He did stumble a bit over the part where he told her she was dead, but her blank expression didn't change at all. He then moved on to the rest about her dad and the diary, and finished more confidently saying, "But I only read four or five" _or six _"entries, so that's okay."

"It is, is it?" Her voice was icy, as was her gaze. "Do you have my diary with you, by any chance?"

"Yeah, I thought you'd want it, so I..."

"Spare me the tale of your tremendous foresight, Drake," she said drily. "Just give me the damn thing."

He handed it over silently. She took it and very politely and oh-so coldly to leave. As he left, he heard her mutter under her breath, "_X-Men_." So she couldn't be that angry, could she? There wasn't anything to be angry _about_, right? Of course, Lydia could get mad at someone for looking at her the wrong way if she felt like it.

Bobby found his first bestest friend in the whole world taking a no-doubt much needed vacation from his work, watching a movie with Jean and Scott. As Bobby entered, Jean looked up at him through her lashes and murmured, "Hello, my love. I've missed you, you know, and your _divine _sense of humor." Scott looked pained, and Jean, smiling, patted his leg reassuringly.

Hank chuckled at the look on Bobby's face. "You know, Ms. Hawk did

have me for a moment. However, on reflection, I quickly realized what must have happened." His smile turned into a smirk. "Warren, might I add, has been left to form his own conclusions. Don't be surprised if he looks at you askance."

Bobby looked at Jean, and said, surprised, "Your not angry that she messed with everyone's mind like that?"

"Well, personally, I think Gambit deserved to be scared like that. I'm only sorry I missed it. And it's not exactly like Lydia wasn't doing stuff like that all the time on our road trip." Scott was turning very pale, and Jean murmured reassuringly to her afflicted husband, "Don't worry. _Then _I was there to stop her before she got out of hand." Scott made some sort of dying rodent noise in his throat.

Jean said, "So, Bobby, you give Lydia her diary back? How'd she react?"

"Um, she seemed... angry. Not only had I done something I all but promised not to do, I told her she was dead. That has to come as something of a shock. And somehow I doubt that the glimpse into her very twisted teenage mind will help her mood much."

"Aw, Bobby, she's not an idiot. She probably has long suspected that she's dead, and no doubt knows that _all _teenage minds are twisted. Except Scott's," she added. "He's always been like this."

"Do tell me, Jean," her husband murmured drily, "when I should thank you for your comments and when I should be insulted, because I'm at a total loss."

Jean grinned, but continued talking to Bobby. "Everyone went through a bad time in some way in high school, and everybody did really crazy, stupid, and sometimes horrible things. It's no biggie."

"Listen to the lady," Hank said solemnly. "She is wise beyond her years."

"You don't understand!" _For that matter, I don't either, really... _"I took away her hope that she could have a body, and I presented her with a past life as manic-depressive and slightly sadistic klepto with a jerk boyfriend, a mother who abandoned her, a father who hated her, and, worst of all, a brother who did everything perfectly. I've given her a million regrets in a life where the only bright side was at least she didn't have to regret anything. And it's _no biggie_"

"Bobby, that's sweet, really. But sometimes remembering the stupid mistakes is worth it. And sometimes it just makes a great story." Suddenly Jean let out a crack of laughter. The men around her started. "Oh my God! Do you guys remember when you were throwing eggs at passing cars on Halloween, and then- was it Bobby?- well, someone had the bright idea of throwing fruit and we cracked that person's windshield and they were wondering who did it? Remember? And then Lisa said..." She trailed off and said weakly, "Oh. That wasn't you guys. That was before I came to live at the mansion."
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The other three nodded bemusedly. There was a moment of silence.

"Returning to our previous topic of conversation," said Hank, "Methinks the boy doth angst too much. Come with me." Without ceremony, Hank took Bobby's arm, wrenched him to his feet, and dragged him towards the doorway.

"Where're you taking me? I don't wanna go..." Bobby wailed
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Rogue looked up to see a determined-looking Beast followed by a sulky-looking Iceman. Motioning for Remy, who she had been training with, to cease and desist for a moment, she smiled wryly at them and said, "Scott send you in for some extra training, too? Ah think that sometimes he does it just for the hell of it."

"I believe our illustrious leader always does it just for the hell of it," Hank replied. "Actually, I'm here to make Bobby talk to Lydia."

"She's upset," Bobby said candidly. "See, I just told her she was dead, and she had a miserable life."

"Oh, poor girl!" Rogue exclaimed. "Where is she?"

A blond head rose above the back of the couch. "Um- here. And not deaf, incidentally. I'm reading." She held up a crimson book, and Bobby grimaced.

Rogue flew over to her and began sympathetically, "Ah must say, ah have no idea what it's like to find out your dead, but if you need to talk about it..."

"About being dead?" Lydia snorted. "Not the most exciting subject in the world. What is interesting is my diary. My favorite entry is the one that says that something really exciting happened, but I can't say what it is 'cause they could use it against me in court.' So sad. I'll never know what I did..."

Rogue glanced over to Bobby, who was looking very bemused. "You're not angry?"

"Well, I was pretty pissed at you for playing the little let's-go-dig-into-everyone's-deep-dark-past X-Men game," Rogue heard Remy snort in agreement, "and if this diary was boring, I might be angry- but hell, I might not have been the brightest teenager in the world, but I was really fun! And watching my downward spiral into degeneration is fascinating! Did you read my bar fight?"

Bobby was blinking more rapidly now. "You're dead and trapped in here forever and you don't want to rant and rave?"

Rogue echoed the sentiment with a brief, "Huh?"

"Lydia," Hank said in rapturous accents, "have I mentioned recently you are like a goddess to me?"

Lydia, sticking to the point, repeated, "Well, have you read my bar fight? I didn't know people actually had bar fights. Come, sit with me, share a Twinkie! Then we can watch the rest of Roger Rabbit, if you insist."

"Of course you _have _to watch it. It's a classic."

"You think the 'Care Bears Adventures in Wonderland' is a classic,"
Rogue murmured, giggling.

"It is!" yelled Bobby. He walked over to the couch and plopped down next to Lydia. She handed him her diary open to the entry she wanted him to read, and went over to the mini-fridge to get out some snacks. He was glad she wasn't angry, but damn, he had done all that worrying for nothing. "You are a mockery of all I stand for," he remarked sullenly.

"I try," replied Lydia.

End
file.